

In our Friday's paper we extracted from this book an account of Joseph Smith, the founder of the sect which it describes. We shall now make some selections more illustrative of the general proceedings of the Mormons. It will have been observed, that one feature in the character of the sect is a kind of gross and superstitious love of the marvellous in those who believe, and an equally gross style of imposture in those who teach,—an imposture so coarse and impudent, that one scarcely could have fancied that it could have obtained acceptance from any large body of people, in any, much less in our own civilized country. One lesson certainly it amply illustrates,—the power of mere bold assumption over uneducated minds. Positiveness, confidence, and decision in those who teach a doctrine, seem to be really almost the tests by which a large number of our fellow-creatures judge of its truth. Whether that larger number also embraces the purer and higher class of minds,—those who would be most benefitted by, and are most deserving of the possession of truth, is another question. Certainly, Mr. Caswall's account of Nauvoo gives little reason to fear that such can be the case with this miserable imposture. The audacious and blasphemous assumptions of inspiration on the part of Smith and his friends, though they have attracted, and may continue in their gross way to amuse a large number of converts, do not appear, in fact, to have mastered any greater number of pure and wise intellects than might have been expected from the character of their tenets, their religious services, and their leaders.

Mr. Caswall took some pains to ascertain the character which these Mormons bore in their own neighbourhood, and the result was not satisfactory. It would seem that the peculiar temptation of Mormons lies in the article of *theiving*. "I have already stated some circumstances which may appear to reflect on the common honesty of some of the Mormons. Mr. K. mentioned that he had lived five years among heathen Indians, and had never been robbed by them of the most trifling article. During the three years which have elapsed since the settlement of the Mormons at Montrose and Nauvoo 14 robberies, to the amount of 2,000 dollars, have been committed upon his property. 1st. His store was robbed of goods worth 560 dollars. 2. His warehouse was plundered of one barrel of pork, two barrels of sugar, and five kegs of lard. 3. His smoke-house was spoiled of 33 hams and 11 shoulders. 4. Robbery deprived him of a barrel and a half of salt. 5. Another barrel of salt. 6. A saddle, bridle, and martingale, which were taken from his stable. 7. Four wheels were taken from his waggon. 8. Three saddles and bridles and a martingale from his stable. 9. 60 bushels of wheat from his granary. 10. Six boxes of glass, 150 pounds of bacon, and two boxes of axes from his warehouse. 11. Six more barrels of salt. 12. Between 300 and 400 bushels of Indian corn. 13. One wheel was stolen from his chariot within an enclosure; and, 14. his store was robbed of 42 pieces of dark prints, five or six pieces of satinette, and other articles, worth about 400 dollars.

Joseph Smith, alluding to these robberies in a sermon, said that he 'did not care how much was taken from Mr. K. and his brother.' He cited the example of Christ and his apostles, who, he said, when hungry, scrupled not to steal corn while walking in the fields. He added the following words—'The world owes me a good living; if I cannot get it otherwise, I will steal it, and catch me at it if you can.'

He has, however, thought fit to disavow these principles. In the *Times and Seasons* of December 1, 1841, we have the following official document:—

"State of Illinois, Hancock County, SS. "Before me, John C. Bennett, Mayor of the city of Nauvoo, personally came Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly called Mormons), who, being duly sworn, according to law, deposed and saith, that he has never, directly or indirectly, encouraged the purloining of property, or taught the doctrine of stealing, or any other evil practice; and that all such vile and unlawful acts will ever receive his unqualified and unreserved disapproval, and the most vigorous opposition of the church over which he presides; and further this deponent saith not.

"JOSEPH SMITH, President of the Church of Latter-day Saints."

"After this follows an account of two unlucky Mormons, who seem to be selected as scapegoats. Being officers of the Nauvoo Legion, they were tried by court-martial, found guilty of theft, and sentenced to be cashiered. Joseph Smith solemnly approves of this sentence, and the proceedings are published in the *Times and Seasons*. About the same time, five Mormons are gazetted as being expelled from the church for larceny.

"The following circumstance was mentioned as a specimen of the manner in which these singular heretics endeavour to rid themselves of the imputation of thievishness universally cast upon them. In the winter of 1841 a Mormon was committed to the penitentiary on a charge of horse-stealing. Upon this the 'Saints' denied that he was a Mormon. Two Mormon preachers, however, offered themselves as bail for the prisoner, and having effected his liberation, speedily decamped. When the spring session of the court of Lee County for 1842 had arrived, it appeared that the accused had followed their example, for neither he nor his securities were to be found."

But, in fact, the peculiarity of this Mormons is one which drops at every turn upon the reader of Mr. Caswall's book. It finds its place, for example, naturally and without effort in the following account of their religious solemnities, as witnessed by Mr. Caswall himself, and without which our account of the proceedings would be highly imperfect. The appearance of the congregation he says was "quite respectable and fully equal to that of dissenting congregations generally in the western country." They assembled in a grove near their as yet unfinished "Temple," and after some choir singing, which lasted for some time, "two elders came forward and ascended a platform rudely constructed of planks and logs. One wore a blue coat, and his companion, a stout, intemperate-looking man, appeared in a thick jacket of green-baize. He in the blue coat gave out a hymn, which was sung, but with little spirit, by the congregation all standing. He then made a few commonplace remarks on the nature of prayer, after which, leaning forward on a railing in front of the platform, he began to pray." The prayer, or at least such portion of it as Mr. Caswall gives, we omit, and the ceremony proceeded with two sermons, divided by a hymn. It will be seen that the first is of a theoretical, the second of a pointedly practical character. The public announcements which succeed may be considered, we suppose, as equally dictated and hallowed by civil convenience and ecclesiastical discipline. But here we will venture on a long extract from Mr. Caswall's own words:—

"Thus he proceeded for perhaps half an hour, after which he sat down, and the elder in green baize, having thrown aside his jacket,—for the heat of the sun was now considerable,—commenced a discourse.

for a house of boarding; that the kings and nobles of the earth, and all weary travellers, might lodge therein, while they should contemplate the word of the Lord, and the cornerstone which He had appointed for Zion; that in this house the Lord had said that there should be reserved a suite of rooms for his servant Joseph, and his seed after him from generation to generation. And that the Lord had also commanded that stock should be subscribed by the saints, and received by the committee for the purpose of building the house. The speaker proceeded as follows:—"Now, brethren, the Lord has commanded this work, and the work must be done. Yes; it shall be done—it will be done. The Gentiles, the men of the world, tell us that such stock must pay 25 per cent. per annum, and the Lord hath required us to take stock; surely, then, when duty and interest go together, you will not be backward to contribute. But only a small amount of stock has hitherto been taken, and the committee appointed by the Lord have had to go on borrowing, and borrowing, until they can borrow no longer. In the mean time, the mechanics employed on the house want their pay, and the committee are not able to pay them. We have a boat ready to be towed up the river to the pine country, to get pine-wood for the edifice. We have a crew engaged, and all ready to start; but we cannot send out the expedition without money. The committee have made great personal sacrifices to fulfil the commandment of the Lord. I myself came here with \$7,000, and now I have only \$2,000, having expended \$5,000 upon the work of the Lord. But we cannot go on in this way any longer. I call on you, brethren, to obey God's command, and take stock, even though you may not dress so finely as you do now, or build such fine houses. Let not the poor man say, 'I am too poor;' but let the poor man contribute out of his poverty, and the rich man out of his wealth, and God will give you a blessing."

"During this address, I noticed some of the English emigrants whom I had seen a few days previously on board the steam-boat at St. Louis. They were listening with fixed attention, and, doubtless, considering how many of their hard-earned sovereigns should be devoted to the pious work of building a fine hotel for the prophet and his posterity. The thought arose in my mind, that these earnest appeals for money were designed mainly for the ears of the 300 green Saints who had just arrived.

"This address being concluded, two other elders followed in a similar strain. They spoke with great fluency, and appeared equally familiar with worldly business and operations in finance as with prophecies and the book of Mormon. At length, having, as they supposed, wrought up the zeal of the congregation to a sufficient pitch, they called on all believers in the book of Mormon, who felt disposed to take stock, to come forward before the congregation and give in their names with the amount of their subscriptions. Upon this appeal there was much whispering among the audience; and I detected two Mormons, apparently from Yorkshire, in the very act of nodding and winking at each other. However, none came forward; and one of the elders coolly remarked, that as they appeared not to have made up their minds as to the amount which they would take, he requested all who wished to become stockholders to come to his house the next afternoon at 5 o'clock.

"The elder who had delivered the first discourse now rose, and said that a certain brother, whom he named, had lost a keg of white lead. 'Now,' said he, 'if any of the brethren present has taken it by mistake, thinking it was his own, he ought to restore it; but if any of the brethren present has stolen the keg, much more ought he to restore it; or else, may be, he will get caught; and that, too, within the corporation limits of the city of Nauvoo.'

"Another person rose and stated, that he had lost a ten-dollar bill. He had never lost any money before in his life; he always kept it very safely; but now, a ten-dollar bill had escaped from him, and if any of the brethren had found it, or taken it, he hoped it would be restored.

"A hymn was now sung, and the service (if such it may be called) having continued from half-past 10 o'clock till 2, finally concluded."

On suggesting shortly afterwards to a Scotch Mormon the want of dignity and solemnity which characterized this strange exhibition, Mr. Caswall had his mouth stopped by the assertion that "the English and Scotch churches taught lies, and that their members (among whom Mr. Caswall was to be ranked) loved lies more than truth; that all their solemnity was produced by hypocrisy and false doctrines respecting God, and that the Mormons despised long faces, and all religions which required people to wear a sanctimonious and hypocritical exterior."

Mr. Caswall had some little controversy with them, but, as far as he reports, without effecting any signal conversions. He asked for the signs of their commission to preach this new religion. An old man told him that miracles—the healing of the sick, the casting out of devils, and the speaking of unknown tongues, were rife among them. Mr. Caswall asked the old man to cure him (Mr. Caswall) of a slight deafness.

"Immediately the old man stepped forward, and before I was aware of his object, thrust his forefingers into my ears, and, lifting up his eyes, uttered for about a minute in a loud voice some unintelligible gibberish. 'There,' he said finally, 'the Holy Ghost prompted me to do that, and now you have heard the unknown tongue.' 'But my hearing is not improved,' I said. 'That,' he replied, 'is, because you have no faith. If ever you believe the Book of Mormon, you will immediately recover perfect hearing, through the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

Mr. Caswall urged the gross mistake (quoted in last Friday's paper) which their prophet had just made, in pronouncing a Greek psalter to be an Egyptian dictionary. "Sometimes," said the Mormon doctor, "Mr. Smith speaks as a prophet, and sometimes as a mere man. If he gave a wrong opinion respecting the book, he spoke as a mere man." (P. 43.) Mr. Caswall expressed to them how much he pitied them:—

"The old man in blue now told me that they pitied me as much as I pitied them. 'Come, my friend,' he said to me, 'let you and I go down to the Mississippi, only let me put you under the water and baptize you, and when you come up again you will see all the mysteries clearly, and will believe in our great signs and wonders.'"

Mr. Caswall then thanked them for not having put him under the Mississippi in good earnest and kept him there, and departed.

The mode in which this baptism is practised is pretty much what might have been expected from the character of those who practise it.

"On one occasion, 165 persons were baptized by immersion at Nauvoo, some for the remission of sins, and some for their deceased friends, which is their baptism for the dead. This business was done by seven elders, who enjoyed it as a capital frolic. One of these elders baptized a woman six times during the same day. Not satisfied with this, she presented herself a seventh time, when the elder jocosely remarked, 'What, haven't you got wet enough already?' A very tall man offering himself, the elder, who is very stout, laughed aloud, and said, 'I am the only one big enough to put tail chaps like you under water.'"

But to return: the controversy ended, Mr. Caswall took his leave. A Mormon ferryman ferried him across the river, whose expressed opinion of his brethren in the faith had been "that it was no use to hoist a flag at Nauvoo as a signal to passengers, for it was sure to be stolen by the people there, they had so much of the Devil in them." (P. 19.) He was destined on this occasion to verify by his own experience the truth of which he had warned the world:—

"When we arrived at the boat we found it safe, as it had been carefully padlocked in the morning. The oars, however, were missing, a circumstance which caused great vexation to the owner. He exclaimed, 'My oars are gone; somebody has hooked my oars.' 'Who has taken your oars?' I asked. 'Some of the boys, I guess,' he replied. 'What! some of the young Lat-r-day Saints?' I said. 'I guess it was,' he answered. 'But do not the young saints learn the ten commandments,' I demanded, 'and especially the eighth, 'Thou shalt not steal?' 'I guess they know them all,' the poor man answered, 'but any how they don't practise them.'"

We have, however, said enough of these miserable impostors. The task of exposure (as Mr. Caswall feels) is not a pleasing one; to repeat blasphemies, to detail profane ceremonies, is an office which needs an apology to the world, and the operation is not made less painful by the ludicrous character of those profanities. We shall, however, and we doubt not Mr. Caswall's sympathy with us, think ourselves well paid for the degradation of this scavenging work, if one English workman is saved from the peril of this debasing delusion, or one ray of light turned upon the state of society which renders such delusions not only possible but popular.

AWFUL THUNDER STORM.—On Saturday se'night the towns of Looe and neighbourhood were visited by one of the most terrific thunder-storms, attended by heavy showers of hail and rain, that was ever remembered by the oldest inhabitant. At Trenant, about a mile from the town, a poor man named Tamblin, at work in a harvest field, was killed by the lightning while in the act of binding a sheaf. The electric fluid, after forcing out the crown of his hat, descended in front of his left side, occasioning a complete longitudinal section of his shirt and trousers, and shattering the stout self-boot of his left foot into fragments, which were scattered to a considerable distance. The only external injury was a flesh' wound, about an inch long, above the left ear. The poor fellow, who bore an excellent character, has left a wife and five children. As in cases of death occasioned by lightning the blood remains in a fluid state, and the body generally flaccid, there is a rapid tendency to putrefaction; therefore, when accidents of this kind occur in remote rural districts, no reasonable time should be lost in making them known to the coroner, who, if a medical man, will be professionally acquainted with the necessity of prompt attendance. It appears that the storm which proved fatal to this poor man extended along the whole of our south coast, the outskirts of it only reaching Truro. In the neighbourhood of St. Austell and St. Blazey it raged with great fury. On East Crinnis Moors, several children, who were gathering blackberries, took refuge from its violence in a building erected for a kiln; but the lightning passed down the chimney and killed two of them, both girls, on the spot. Both the unfortunate children were daughters of working miners; one of them was about 11 years of age, and the other about 9. Several of their companions were scorched and injured, but they are expected to recover. At Par, the mast of a schooner was split by the lightning, but no life was lost. At St. Anthony, an arish mow of wheat, belonging to Mr. Lowry, caught fire, but was soon extinguished by some labourers who were near the spot, so that very little damage was sustained. An arish mow of oats belonging to Mr. Lowry, of Nanshull, in St. Just, also took fire, the ignition in both cases having been occasioned by the lightning. In Falmouth roads such torrents of rain fell, with large pieces of ice, that small boats were obliged to be baled to keep them from sinking.—West Briton.